

The Provincial Library
GOOD FORM

from
LETTER-WRITING

Arthur Wentworth Eaton.

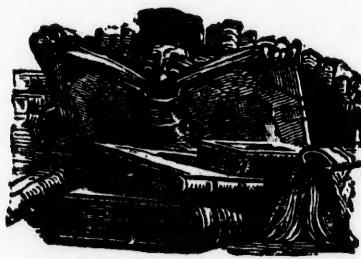
ITS ETHICS AND ETIQUETTE

WITH REMARKS ON THE PROPER USE OF MONOGRAMS, CRESTS AND SEALS.

BY

ARTHUR WENTWORTH EATON, B. A., (HARVARD)

AUTHOR OF "ACADIAN LEGENDS AND LYRICS," ETC.;
TEACHER OF ENGLISH LITERATURE AND
RHETORIC, AND LECTURER ON
MODERN THOUGHT, IN NEW
YORK SCHOOLS



NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
MDCCXC

NS
651.7
E

COPYRIGHT, 1890,
By FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY

450

PREFACE.

THE art of letter-writing properly demands consideration in a series of books on "Good Form," for there are not many arts so universal or so necessary, and there are to-day too few accomplished letter-writers. Especially useful must a little volume like the present prove in schools where careful attention has to be given to this subject in its details.

The frequent reference here made to English use, has seemed necessary to the author from the fact that in most things, and certainly in literature, the standards of the best English society are properly those that have always been followed by the best American society.

Among famous letter-writers have been Madame de Sévigné, Samuel Pepys, Arthur Wilson, Alexander Pope, Lord Chesterfield, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Lady Russell, Horace Walpole, Edward Gibbon, Hannah More, William Cowper, John Adams, and his wife, George Canning, Sydney Smith, Charles Lamb, Robert Southey, John Wilson, Miss Burney, the Countess of Blessington, Thomas de Quincey, Margaret Fuller, William M. Thackeray, and Mrs. Carlyle.



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| THE ART OF LETTER-WRITING, | 9 |
| CONSTRUCTION OF SENTENCES, | 12 |
| CHOICE OF WORDS, | 14 |
| SPELLING, ABBREVIATIONS, UNDERLINING, | 16 |
| NEATNESS, | 17 |
| PAPER, INK, PEN, | 18 |
| SIZE AND SHAPE OF PAPER, | 21 |
| ADDRESS AND DATE, | 22 |
| MONOGRAMS, | 25 |
| COATS OF ARMS AND CRESTS, | 27 |
| ENVELOPE, SEAL, SUPERScription, | 32 |
| PUNCTUATION ON THE ENVELOPE, | 36 |
| CITY ADDRESSES, | 39 |
| THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF LETTERS, | 41 |
| LETTERS TO TRADESMEN AND SERVANTS, | 47 |
| LETTERS WRITTEN IN THE THIRD PERSON, | 48 |
| INVITATIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS, | 50 |
| POSTSCRIPTS, | 54 |
| LETTERS OF CONGRATULATION, CONDOLENCE, ETC., | 55 |
| ILL-TEMPERED LETTERS, | 57 |
| ANONYMOUS LETTERS, | 59 |
| LETTERS TO ABSENT FRIENDS, | 60 |

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| ENTHUSIASM; KIND WORDS IN LETTERS, | 61 |
| BUSINESS LETTERS, | 62 |
| POST CARDS, | 64 |
| ANSWERING LETTERS, | 65 |
| JOKES; EGOTISM; HASTE, ETC., | 66 |
| KEEPING LETTERS, | 68 |
| WRITING MATERIALS FOR GUESTS, | 69 |
| FORMS OF ADDRESS IN WRITING TO PUBLIC MEN, OFFICERS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY, ETC., | 70 |
| FORMS OF ADDRESS IN WRITING TO DISTINGUISHED ENGLISHMEN OR ENGLISHWOMEN, | 73 |

“True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.”

POPE, *Essay on Criticism.*

“In nothing can good or bad form be shown more clearly than in one's correspondence, under which may be included letters to friends, notes both formal and informal, invitations, answers to invitations, business letters, and letters to tradespeople.”

Good Form in England.

“Letter-writing is in fact, but conversation carried on with the pen when distance or circumstances forbid the easier method of exchanging ideas by spoken words.”

“First-rate quality in any commodity—material, mental, moral, or spiritual, is not to be had for the asking. But pleasant, cheery, happy letters, such letters as—like the quality of mercy are twice blest; courteous, graceful letters such as win young people friends and go far to keep such friends in good humor; hearty, affectionate letters, such as strike the chords of love and awaken mysterious tremors in response; letters that tend to keep us at our best and to protect us from sinking down to our worst—these any one may write who is not too indolent to take the trouble and not possessed by the delusion that accomplishments come by nature as spots do upon the leopard's hide.”

AUGUSTUS JESSOPP,
In *Nineteenth Century Review*, August, 1886.



GOOD FORM

LETTER-WRITING

THE ART OF LETTER-WRITING.

IT is often said that letter-writing has gone out of fashion, by which is meant that the long, formal epistles, descriptive or sentimental, of our grandparents or great-grandparents, are almost never written now. Very charming, very quaint and amusing, some of those letters were, with their minute descriptions, shrewd and clever observations, precise epithets, brocaded compliments, and stilted forms of address and subscription. Undoubtedly long letters are still written, but the newspapers make detailed descriptions of all public and most private events no longer necessary; and even letters of sentiment are written now in a style more brief and colloquial than in old times. Where our forefathers, following strictly orthographic and epistolary rules, would have written a few long letters, we commonly write a multitude of brief, hurried notes. Indeed we live so rapidly, have so many things to see and do, and so little time to see and do

them in, that long, studied letters are no longer possible. As a rule we are compelled to write in the brief intervals of business or pleasure, amidst a hundred distractions of mind, and with little sense of satisfaction in our work. Yet letter-writing will never cease to be necessary, nor will it ever cease to be, like dancing, a graceful art to be learned as any other art is learned, by patient exercise.

The inheritance of refined taste, association with well-bred people, and a kind heart, go far toward making rules for letter-writing unnecessary, but there are always points on which people, especially young people, need instruction, if they would fulfil all the just requirements of this art.

Letter-writing being first of all a necessary means of communication between people of the same or different social grades should satisfy the demands of *utility*, *beauty* or *grace*, and *good feeling*. On these three principles all rules for correspondence should be based, and whatever fads or whims may for the moment happen locally to prevail, it will be found that the best society everywhere recognizes as inflexible only such laws as tend to the greatest advancement of the ends of *utility*, *grace*, and *good feeling*. Consequently, there are here, as in every other department of life, no fixed laws or rules which exist without reasons for their existence. To one or another of the three principles I have mentioned are to be referred all the rules and suggestions I shall give in the following pages.

The ordinary rules of composition and grammar extend with full force to letter-writing. In any composition, one, having first of all something to say, before writing should take a little time to arrange his thought, and then should try to express himself in the best and clearest way.

CONSTRUCTION OF SENTENCES.

IN the framing of sentences a few simple rules must be kept in mind and strictly followed. Here are the most important :

- (a) In every sentence we frame, the common rules of grammar must be observed.
- (b) In the making of sentences two things are especially to be sought,— clearness and force.
- (c) Sentences should, therefore, never be long and involved : each sentence should be made to convey but one principal thought.
- (d) Circumlocutions, and fine writing should be avoided : one should write directly and simply.
- (e) We should always make it clear to what nouns personal and relative pronouns are meant to refer.
- (f) The proper sequence of the tenses of verbs must be observed.
- (g) The auxiliaries *shall* and *will* must be correctly used.
- (h) Each new sentence must begin with a capital letter.

(i) The ordinary rules of punctuation should be strictly regarded throughout.

(j) Adjectives or epithets, should be fitly chosen, and the same adjectives not be too often repeated; yet in the choice of adjectives, as in the choice of other words, pedantic strictness should be avoided.

(k) Care should be taken to give adverbs, and adverbial phrases, like *only*, *even*, *also*, *at least*, etc., exactly their proper places in the sentence, as, by neglect of this rule, the thought in the sentence may be considerably changed.

(l) In correspondence, as in conversation, a graceful, flowing style should be cultivated. Sentences should follow each other naturally and easily, each sentence rather growing out of the preceding than being newly introduced. Abruptness in writing like abruptness in speech or manner is always objectionable.

CHOICE OF WORDS.

HERBERT SPENCER, in his "Philosophy of Style," like most good writers on rhetoric, has much to say about the superiority, in general, of words derived from Saxon, to words derived from Latin roots. On this point, also, Prof. A. S. Hill, in his "Principles of Rhetoric," and "Our English," has some judicious remarks. The conclusion of both writers is that while one should aim to use strong, vigorous, simple words, he should never hesitate when his subject seems to require it, to use words of greater elegance, words that come, directly or indirectly, from the Latin, or the Greek. As a rule, however, fine words such as *avail*, *preclude*, *individual*, for man, *species* for kind, *gentleman*, and *lady*, when it is possible, as it usually is, to say, *man* and *woman*, *Creator* for God, *alliance* for marriage, *retire*, for go to bed, *erect*, for build, *limb*, for leg, and the like are to be avoided. "It is not well-bred persons," says Professor Hill, "who are ashamed to use the brief, simple, definite, ordinary words which naturally come to the lips."

In letter-writing, as in conversation, words not in

good use and common slang should be rejected. No well-bred person will drift into the use of vulgarisms like the words *toney*, *high-toned*, *elegant*, for agreeable or nice, *girls*, for maids, *saleslady*, for saleswoman, *real* (nice or good), *rustler*, and *hustler*.

To those who feel themselves deficient in the art of correct expression, and indeed to all persons interested in the English tongue, I earnestly recommend Professor Hill's books mentioned above—books of special interest and suggestiveness; and no young writer should be without Rev. Edwin A. Abbott's "How to Write Clearly," a small, inexpensive, valuable book.

SPELLING, ABBREVIATIONS, UNDERLINING.

MANY persons do not naturally spell well, and so are obliged to keep a dictionary always at hand. Such persons should never write a word, about the proper spelling of which they are uncertain, without looking it up. Bad spelling like bad grammar, is an offence against society.

In the body of a letter, numerals must not be used except as dates and to indicate the numbers of houses ; quantities should always be fully written out. Abbreviations are likewise inadmissible. "Shall go," for I shall go, "sd." for should, "wd." for would, "wh." for which, etc., are wrong. Above all things never abbreviate people's names, as "Mrs. A." or "Miss B."

Rarely underline a word. Your correspondent is expected to be able to give the proper emphasis to each word in your sentence.

NEATNESS.

NEVER send out a scrawled or blotted or otherwise untidy note or letter. Such a letter will be an eyesore to him who receives it, and its writer will accordingly suffer in his estimation.

Keep always a good supply of clean blotting-paper on your desk or table, and use it freely.

PAPER, INK, PEN.

THE paper to be used for social correspondence should be either white or cream-tinted. Strict good form does not recognize the use of colored papers. Nor are papers with a fancy finish of any sort allowable. Plain white English paper, of good quality, either smooth or with a dead finish, is always correct. The Princess of Wales, or the Duchess of Edinburgh, would use such paper for her notes. Tinted papers are much used in this country, but however delicate and pretty they may be, they are never so refined as white or cream-tinted papers.

Lined papers must never be used for social correspondence; they are extremely bad form. Every person should be taught to write evenly without lines, and to preserve proper distances between his lines.

In notes it is much better to leave a small margin on each side of the page, if one can do so. But the margin must not be too wide, and the writing should cover the part written as evenly as possible, no one

line extending far beyond another. A crowded looking, or unevenly covered page is very bad.

When people are in mourning they should use black edged paper for all their notes. In this country many people are not so particular about this as in Europe, nor are those who use mourning paper so careful to have the width of the black edge vary with the degrees of relationship to the dead. In England when a husband or a wife dies, the survivor may use paper with an edge at least half an inch wide. In America this would be very conspicuous, and would seem to make an undue parade of one's grief, but there is an evident propriety in using at different times mourning paper of different widths of border. There is a delicate sentiment in all such matters that should not be ignored.

It was a local fashion, some time ago, to use violet ink, but colored inks are never correct. Black ink, and that alone, should be used for all correspondence, and ink should always be of the best quality, so that it may look well, and not fade.

Quill pens are now comparatively little used, but like other hand-made articles, they are always more highly valued than steel pens, the products of machinery, and the people who can use them comfortably are to be envied. The stub pen approaches the quill more nearly than any other, and is almost wholly used by graceful letter-writers. Its use is to be commended.

In business, fine handwriting is admissible; in social correspondence the handwriting should be bold and graceful, and bear no marks of the writing school, or the business college. Flourishes and elaborate capitals are always in very bad taste.

SIZE AND SHAPE OF PAPER.

THERE are three leading sizes of note-paper, known to stationers as *commercial*, *octavo*, and *billet*. For long letters, or in general for men's use, the largest or commercial size, is that commonly chosen. Its average size is $7\frac{1}{8} \times 4\frac{7}{8}$ inches. If this paper is folded once, an envelope 5×4 inches in size is used, but if twice, the envelope may be oblong, and measure $5\frac{1}{8} \times 3\frac{1}{8}$ inches. For ordinary notes and short letters this paper is unnecessarily large, and the size most popular for these is octavo, which measures $7 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and is properly folded once to fit an envelope measuring $4\frac{5}{8} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ inches. For invitations, or answers to invitations the billet size is most correct. This measures about $6\frac{1}{8} \times 4$ inches, and has an envelope to fit measuring about $4\frac{1}{8} \times 3\frac{1}{8}$ inches.

Paper should always be purchased which folds in the common way, so that the pages may turn like the leaves of a book ; sheets which turn from the bottom upwards must never be used. Noticeably large or very small stationery is not good form, the one looks clumsy, the other mean. Refinement may be shown in the size as well as the quality and color of the paper chosen for correspondence.

ADDRESS AND DATE.

IN the upper right hand corner of the paper, not too high up, or else in the middle of the sheet, near the top, may be printed in black, or in color, or be simply embossed, the address of the writer. If the address be that of the writer's country house, it is desirable to have the name of the nearest railway station and telegraph office in the upper left hand corner. The rule as to the position of the printed address is very simple. If no crest or monogram or other address appear on the sheet the address looks more graceful in the middle of the sheet ; if a crest is printed in the upper left hand corner, the address must come in the upper right hand corner. It is however quite correct, and especially on small note-paper, to print the address in the middle of the sheet near the top, and the crest directly above. In an English note which I lately received, the paper is printed as follows :

TELEGRAPH & PARCELS,
ROWFANT STATION,
BRIGHTON LINE.

**ROWFANT,
CRAWLEY,
SUSSEX.**

and the date is written to the right of the word Sussex below. In another, however, which comes from the town house of a nobleman, the address is printed in the right hand corner of the sheet :

54 EATON PLACE
S. W.

In this case the date is written just below the address.

Another English note from a person of high standing has the address as follows :

1, MARLOES ROAD,
KENSINGTON, W.

The date here also is written directly under the word "Kensington."

The position of the date, in notes which have the writer's address printed, is perhaps a matter of question. Some of the most graceful notes I have lately received although having the address printed in the right hand corner at the top, have the date written at the end.

To my mind this is preferable. There is no strong reason why the address and date should come together, and it gives the note a more finished look to have the date written gracefully at the end, in the lower left hand corner. If the address is not printed, it is more commonly written at the end, with the date below it. In letters the address and date may properly be written either at the beginning, or at the end. In business letters, where both need to be conspicuous, it is undoubtedly better to put them at the beginning. In other letters it is perhaps more graceful to put them at the end. But there is no fixed rule in the matter except in the case of notes of invitation, where both must always come at the end.

It is an admirable plan to have one's address printed on his paper: it is unpretentious, yet it gives the note or letter a more elegant look, it saves writing the address, and it prevents any possible confusion regarding the place to which an answer should be sent.

No letter should ever be sent out undated. The date should be written either "July 10, 1890," or "July tenth," or "10th."

Correspondence cards, which are perfectly good form and very convenient, often have the day of the week engraved at the top. This is quite correct.

In familiar notes, where one's address is well known, it is unnecessary to write the name of the street or the number.

MONOGRAMS.

THE monogram when used at all, if the address is not printed, should be in the middle of the page. If the address comes in the right hand corner, the monogram must come in the left. Monograms are often very pretty, and especially for young ladies, who are not suffered to use crests, they may be considered sufficiently good form. The writer of "Good Form in England," however, is of the opinion that in England, while not exactly bad form, monograms cannot be regarded as strictly good form.

Monograms should in no case appear on the envelope. That should be perfectly plain unless it bear the crest of the writer, or be sealed with red or black sealing-wax, which may be stamped with the writer's crest if he own one, or with his initial, or a small monogram. To have the writer's initials conspicuously printed across the left hand corner of the sheet, thus,

A. J. F.

looks egotistical. To have them in the middle of the sheet is quite as bad. If one have no crest he should use a good monogram or nothing. Monograms should be neat and artistic. Like the address they should be printed in colors pleasant to the eye, harsh reds and greens especially being avoided. A monogram may be printed in several colors without violating good taste.

COATS OF ARMS AND CRESTS.

THE science of heraldry should be far better known than it is. It is a science full of dignity, and there are few more interesting departments, if not of history, of antiquarian research. Sir Walter Scott makes Di Vernon say to Frank Osbaldistone with half indignant surprise, "What! is it possible? not know the figures of Heraldry! Of what could your father be thinking?" In European countries interest in heraldry is, of course, more widespread than here, and its laws are better understood, but among well-bred people in this country, the subject is by no means ignored. Coats of arms were originally badges of social distinction, and when people attain position they naturally still wish for the traditional badge. Coats of arms are of no value however, but rather expose those who use them to ridicule, if they are borne otherwise than by undoubted inheritance. There are families in America who can show an equal right to their coats of arms as to their family names, but it is well known that there are people who cannot trace their ancestry for three generations; who do not even know who their earliest

ancestor in this country was, much less to whom they are related in Europe, who ostentatiously bear arms. A fashionable stationer has lately told me that in several instances he has been asked by rich people to find a crest for them. They did not even prescribe that it should be one borne by an English family of the same name, but merely that it should be a pretty crest. Another says that he has frequently been asked by customers to find for them the finest crest belonging to any family of the same name as that borne by themselves.

Very few well-bred families abroad use quarterings, preferring to have their arms as simple as possible ; but there is a story told of an American family in Paris who had had stamped on a set of china a coat of arms with so many quarterings that people who happened to see it in passing the shop where it was displayed, used to ask eagerly what noble duke owned it. Other similar stories come to us now and then from abroad, which would be amusing if they were not so discreditable to American civilization. If arms are not inherited, it is an offence against society to bear them. Families whose earliest ancestors in this country, nine or ten generations ago brought here a coat of arms on book plates, or parchments, or old silver, may be pretty sure that they have a right to bear arms. People who, through recent researches, have become well assured that to some ancestor in Europe, in the fourteenth, fifteenth, or sixteenth

century, arms were granted, have likewise a right to them, but it is to be feared that, as a rule, the people in American cities who bear arms most conspicuously, have simply taken them without any regard to ownership. There are few names of British origin in America that are not likewise still found in Britain, but only patient genealogical research can make us sure of our relationship to these families, and this requires the work of honest, trained genealogists, of whom there are many both in Great Britain and America.

For a very moderate sum any American family of English or Scottish descent can have its genealogy traced, if it is possible to trace it, and then its members will know whether they may rightfully bear arms or not. Such an inheritance is very valuable, and unless a coat of arms originating in Britain has come down in one's family, from generation to generation, and the ancestral line is already traced, money spent for genealogical and heraldic research will be well spent. In a better state of civilization the people of America will not use coats of arms until they can prove their inherited right to do so.

Those who have a right to arms must, in using them, observe the following rules :

Coats of arms may be used on carriages, and on any part of the harness of horses where arms are ever put; but crests alone may be put on the buttons of servants' liveries, and on horses' blinkers. Crests alone, never

full arms, must be used on seals and silver and on paper and envelopes.

To print the crest in its own color is more strictly correct, but it may properly be printed in any color, or in gold or silver, or be simply embossed. If the address is not printed it is better to have the crest in the middle of the paper. If the address is printed in the middle, the crest must be directly above; if in the upper right hand corner, the crest must be in the upper left.

The motto if there be one properly belongs with the crest.

It is quite right for any male descendant of a man who has properly borne arms to use the family crest, but the full coat of arms belongs rightfully to the head of the house alone and may be borne by the younger branches only by being *differenced*. In this country where new arms cannot be granted, it is certainly pardonable for any one, whether of an older or a younger branch of a family, to bear the full arms of his ancestor.

Ladies do not properly bear arms at all, unless they are heiresses. The use of arms, or even of a crest on her paper, by a young lady would be extremely bad form. Abroad even married ladies, except those of high rank, are very chary in their use. Here where we have no titles and where arms serve merely as a graceful connecting link with the past, I do not think that women should be wholly debarred from the use of

at least crests. At any rate, the use of the family seal may always be granted them. An Englishman in New York, the only son of a titled Londoner, tells me that he permits his American wife to use the family crest, but only in connection with her printed address. A married lady can, of course, use only her husband's crest. Two coats of arms can never be used by one person, but sons, or daughters if they be heiresses, may quarter their mother's arms in the regular way. A man can never use his wife's arms.

No American should, under any circumstances, use a crest on a visiting card. Arms should be borne unostentatiously, and when we have established our right to bear them, we should carefully study the rules of heraldry so as to commit no solecism in their use. There are fixed laws for the use of arms from which we have no right to depart, and there are hand-books of heraldry which will enlighten us concerning these laws. Americans should be especially careful to employ in their genealogical and heraldic researches only persons properly recommended, for here as everywhere else many charlatans are to be found. By application to the librarians of the New York Biographical and Genealogical Society, 23 West 44th St., and the Secretary of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Somerset St., Boston, the addresses of reliable persons for genealogical and heraldic research can at any time be learned.

ENVELOPE, SEAL, SUPERSCRIPTION.

THE best English pronunciation of the first syllable of the word envelope approaches as nearly as possible the French sound of en, a sound between *on* and *ong*. The accent is properly on the first, not the second syllable.

The envelope should always be of the same quality and color as the paper it is to enclose, and should be as nearly as possible the size of the paper folded once. For social purposes stamped envelopes are never used.

The gummed envelope, without a seal is perfectly correct, but a neat seal of red sealing-wax always gives a refined look to a letter and is a desirable adjunct thereto. Every one should have an engraved seal containing the initial letter of his surname, his monogram, or if he be so fortunate as to own one, his crest, and should use it with red sealing wax on ceremonious notes and letters. If the writer is in mourning black sealing wax should, of course, be used, but no other colors except black and red are good form. "To get a good impression from your seal," says Mrs. Sherwood,

"you may first rub it with linseed oil, then dust it with a little rough powder; and then press it quickly and firmly on the wax." Every lady's desk should have on it a wax taper, a seal, and a large stick of red or black sealing wax. The impression must not be made with anything save a proper seal. When finished the seal should show neatness and care. The envelope should have printed on it no monogram or other device, except it be the crest.

The direction or superscription of a letter should be as graceful as possible. It is this that first meets the eye and it should be in such good taste that the receiver would be unconsciously attracted towards the contents of the letter. A refined letter like a well-bred man or woman should, on the outside show unmistakable marks of refinement.

In directing a letter to a gentleman or a man recognized as a gentleman, never by any chance preface his name with *Mr.* In England the well-known rule is to use *Mr.* to tradesmen and mechanics, but never to men of recognized social position. In this country the conditions are somewhat different, but here as there, the line can easily be drawn. If we should write for a plumber to inspect our gas pipes we should, of course, address him as "Mr. John Jones," but if our letter was to a professional man or a person of any social standing in the community we should scrupulously address him as "John Jones Esquire," the *Esquire* or *Esq'r.*, being written with a capital E. No

matter how young the man may be, if too old to be addressed as *Master*, he has a right to expect the title *Esquire*. This is traditional English good form and we have no right to disregard it. When it is necessary to address a man and his wife at once, the following forms are correct:

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Smith, or

The Reverend Reginald and Mrs. Star, or

The Reverend Dr. and Mrs. Willoughby.

It is common in America to address an invitation to a man and his wife in this way, but traditional English custom gives the wife the right to represent the family in all social matters, and, as I shall have occasion to say further on, directs that her name alone shall appear on the envelope containing an invitation, or reply to an invitation, in which her husband's name as well as hers is found.

Authorities differ as to whether two unmarried sisters should be addressed as the *Miss Thomsons*, or the *Misses Thomson*; interesting discussions on this point will be found in all the leading dictionaries. The best rule undoubtedly is in speaking, to say, the *Miss Thomsons*: in addressing a letter, to write, *The Misses Thomson*. In the body of the letter the colloquial form is preferable.

In writing Mrs. or Esq'r. it is better form to raise the letters *rs* in *Mrs.*, and the *r* in *Esq'r.* considerably above the other letters. When one has occasion to write Mr. the same rule should be followed.

A letter to a physician should be addressed :

Ralph Waldo, Esq'r. M. D.

A letter to the younger of two men of the same name should be :

M. G. Haughton, Jun'r., Esq'r.

The proper abbreviation for *Reverend*, is Rev'd.

A letter to a clergyman should be addressed as follows :

The Revd.

Frank Thompson.

The article *The* should always precede the *Revd.*, and the *d.* which ends the abbreviation *Revd.* should properly be raised above the other letters.

PUNCTUATION ON THE ENVELOPE.

IT is unnecessary to punctuate the superscription of a letter. The most elegant books have few if any punctuation marks on their title pages, or in their running titles ; and many people of taste likewise omit them in the superscriptions of their letters. Punctuation marks are intended to make the sense clearer, but the titles of books and the superscriptions of letters are sufficiently plain without them, and by many, in these cases, they are regarded as blemishes. If a letter is punctuated, the punctuation should be as follows :

Harry Hamilton, Esqr.,

38, East 10th St.,

New York.

The reason for the comma after the number 38, is probably that some preposition like *on* belongs here, the omission of which makes the phrase elliptical.

The common abbreviations of *Esquire* to *Esq'r.*, and *Street*, or *Avenue* to *St.*, or *Ave.*, are perfectly good

form, but the words may of course be written fully if one prefers.

Mr., *Mrs.*, and *Miss*, are abbreviations respectively of Master, and Mistress, but while in most dictionaries, *Mr.*, and *Mrs.* are treated as abbreviations, *Miss* is never so treated. Stormonth, however, our highest authority in such matters, evidently feeling the necessity for uniformity in these words, treats *Mr* and *Mrs* like *Miss*, as words or signs fully naturalized in the language, and not abbreviations of words, although he gives the same account of their origin as other lexicographers. I therefore conclude that one may regard *Mr.* and *Mrs.* as abbreviations or not, as he pleases. If they are so regarded, as in the case of all abbreviations on the envelope or in the body of the letter, a period must be carefully placed after them.

A married lady must never be addressed by her Christian name or names, she is always "Mrs. George Layton," not "Mrs. Anna Layton."

The question is often asked, "How should a widow be addressed—by her Christian name, or by the name of her deceased husband? In this matter custom varies, but it seems to me decidedly better form to address her by her husband's name. There is no reason why a widow as long as she remains so, should not be "Mrs. Brenton Harris," the name she has borne during her married life. There are, however, cases where it will probably seem more natural to address her as "Mrs. Margaret Harris,"

and then it will undoubtedly be quite correct to do so.

To or *For* on a letter is unnecessary.

For

Paul Layton, Esqr.

looks pedantic. Never put the words "Present," "Addressed," "Favored by," or "Kindness of" on your envelopes : they are not in good use.

There is art even in putting the postage stamps on letters : they should always be put on evenly and not too near the edge.

Do not address your letters upside down, and do not wrongly address them. Punch once gave the following : "Hullo, Pythagoras, what's the matter ? O my dear fellow, I've been writing to my tailor to put another inch and a half in my waistband, and I've composed a valentine to my adored Anna, and Oh, I've put 'em in the wrong envelopes !"

CITY ADDRESSES.

ONE point of interest chiefly to dwellers in cities, demands attention here. It is the question whether on letters between two points in the same city the envelope should have in the address the full name of the city with or without the word "City," or the word "City" alone. Present custom in New York sanctions, for social correspondence, the disuse of anything below the name and number of the street, but this makes an incomplete address and is of course only a passing whim. Permanent use requires that the name of the city, be it Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or Chicago, *be fully written out*. The word, "City" alone may perhaps be tolerated on business letters, but like most abbreviations, it is bad form for social correspondence. "New York City" is without doubt, the more perfect form of address, especially since *New York* is likewise the name of the state; but as a letter sent from one point to another in Boston, or Chicago is addressed simply "Boston," or "Chicago," so in New York the address will be perfectly clear if it be only "New York." If we are writing from some

other place we must add either "City," or else, below the name of the city the initials, "N. Y."

Indeed, letters sent from state to state, or from town to town in the same state, should always bear in their address the name of the state or its legal abbreviation.

THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF LETTERS.

THE various degrees of intimacy between ourselves and our correspondents are denoted by the following scale of customary forms of address :

Sir, or Madam,

Dear Sir, or Dear Madam,

My dear Sir, or Dear Madam,

Dear Mr. Jones, or Dear Mrs. Jones,

My dear Mr. Jones, or Dear Mrs. Jones,

My dear Friend.

The corresponding scale of forms in the closing of letters is :

Truly yours, or Yours truly,

Very truly yours,

Sincerely yours,

Very sincerely yours,

Faithfully, or Cordially, or Very sincerely yours,

Affectionately, or Faithfully yours,

As a rule it is more graceful to put the word *yours* last.

Letters to friends should never begin "Dear Friend" or "Friend Max." The name of the person written to should always be given, but never with "Friend." "Dear Charles, or "Dear Mary," or else "My dear Mr. Butler," or "My dear Mrs. Childs," are the only correct forms. Be careful not to write dear with a capital D when it is preceded by "My." After "My dear Charles," either a comma or a colon is correct. A colon looks a little heavy, therefore a comma is generally to be preferred. A third mark of punctuation between the address and the body of the letter, is the colon with a dash. This is still more formal than the colon, and its use in ordinary letters is not desirable.

In the address, *Sir*, or *Madam* should, of course, always begin with a capital: as also should *Father*, *Mother*, *Sister*, or *Brother*. In the closing form, the word beginning the phrase, as *Very*, in "Very sincerely yours," should always have a capital, while the other words of the phrase should not.

Never sign yourself by a nickname, as *Mamie*, or *Bessie*. It is sometimes allowable to sign only your initials to a letter, but this can only be done when your correspondent knows you well.

In general make the ending of your letter correspond with its tone throughout, and especially in social correspondence, let it be graceful and natural. Inflex-

ible rules for the ending of letters as for everything else in letter-writing, are neither possible nor desirable. A kind heart, good breeding, and cultivated taste will prevent mistakes here or anywhere else.

In letters from prominent persons, in my possession, I find the graceful forms: "Ever sincerely yours," "Most cordially yours," "Always cordially yours," "Very cordially yours." "Believe me, with much regard, very truly yours," "Yours, with much regard," or if the note be to a person in affliction, "Yours, with much sympathy," are also in good taste. "Sincerely," or "Affectionately," without the word "Yours" is never allowable. "Respectfully," and "Very respectfully," are alike inadmissible. "Respectfully yours" is not good form for letters between persons of the same social standing. If the letter be a very formal one, "Your obedient servant" is the form that should be used. "I am, Sincerely yours," is perfectly correct, but very formal. "Believe me, ever sincerely yours," is graceful and good. "Believe me to be" is not correct.

It is entirely bad form to begin a letter, especially a friendly letter, with the name, with or without his address, of the person to whom you are writing, as:

Arthur Cutler, Esqr.

20, West 43rd St., New York.

My dear Sir,

If there is any reason for the person's name appearing at all, it should come on the last page, in the left hand corner, below the writer's signature. In business letters it is quite correct to put the name at the end of the letter, but no matter how common it may be to do so, it is not good form to put it at the beginning.

Business letters must always begin, *Sir*, or *Dear Sir*, and end with either *Yours, etc.*, *Very truly yours*, or, in the most formal letters, *Your obedient servant*.

Such phrases as, "Hoping to see you soon," or "Hoping" anything, are ungraceful. "*I remain*" yours truly" is nearly as bad. *Remain* is a fine word and should be avoided.

In replying to a letter never write less familiarly than you have been addressed. Even should you think that the writer has addressed you with undue familiarity, unless he meant to offend, it is better because kinder to reply in a friendly way. On the part of ladies, however, a certain amount of reserve is necessary in writing to strangers. There are men who would presume upon a woman's cordiality, and would make capital of a letter written in an ordinarily friendly way. Even a formal note can be misconstrued by a designing or pushing person into a desire for close friendship. Suspicion of every one with whom we come in contact is a detestable trait, but yet, in society, a certain amount of reserve and caution are necessary if we would avoid unpleasant complications.

To an equal, one should never write or speak of a

son, daughter, brother or sister, as *Mr.* John, or *Miss* Florence, *Mr.* Jones, or *Miss* Jones. It is easy to say, "My daughter, Kate," "My brother, John," or "My sister, Florence." I once knew a family in which there were several young women who invariably spoke of each other as "Miss Helen," "Miss Kitty," and "Miss Jane." It is an insult to one's breeding to be treated as if the speaker or writer was afraid one was in danger of using too familiarly the name of a member of his family.

It ought to be quite unnecessary to say that to sign one's self *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss*, *Dr.*, or *Reverend*, is a sign of ill breeding, or of ignorance, but it is surprising how often in the case of married women this mistake is made.*

If a woman is writing to a stranger she should give her address prefixed by *Miss*, or *Mrs.* in brackets at the close of the letter after her signature. Or else she should say: "Please address Miss Mary Brooks," or "Mrs. John Brown." From lack of thoughtfulness in this matter, on the part of women, persons to whom they write are often perplexed to know how to address them. Sometimes there is no way of deciding whether one's correspondent is a man or a woman; sometimes even when this point is made clear, it is impossible to know whether the woman is married or unmarried.

* In England people of rank never append their titles to their names. On the Continent this is continually done, but it seems a clear violation of good taste.

If it is necessary to write *junior* after your name, write it *jun'r*.

In business letters a lady should not ordinarily sign her Christian name in full, but only her initial or initials, and if a reply is needed, she should be especially careful to leave her correspondent in no possible doubt as to her sex.

Avoid ostentation in your signature; if you have more than three names do not write them all, but use initials instead. It is better to sign your name always in one way.

LETTERS TO TRADESMEN AND SERVANTS.

LADIES are sometimes puzzled to know how to address inferiors on matters of business. In such cases the third person is generally used, as: "Dr. (or Mr.) Corbett wishes Mr. Smith to call at his house, etc." "Mrs. Thorne desires Ellen Jones to be at her house, 24, West 18th St., on Thursday morning at nine o'clock." If written in the first person, as they sometimes are, such notes should begin: "To Mr. Smith. Please call at my house, etc." "To Ellen Jones. I wish you to have my house in readiness," etc. These notes should end: *Yours, etc.*, the signature following.

LETTERS WRITTEN IN THE THIRD PERSON.

THE French say : "In manuscript letters never use the third person except when writing to your dress-maker or your tailor." Formal notes of invitation also, and replies thereto, are of course written in the third person. In such notes one must be careful never to drift into the use of the first person. To write :

"Mrs. Jones accepts with pleasure Mrs. Brown's kind invitation for luncheon on Monday, January sixth; *I* shall be delighted to meet Lady Jenks," would be a shocking mistake. The note must be consistent throughout.

In invitations to weddings it is customary in America to say :

"Mr. and Mrs. Brown request *your* presence at the marriage of their daughter, etc."

This form is perhaps so well established that it may be felt that we have no right to criticise it ; but it seems to me a little lacking in respect for the guest who has a right to expect that his name shall appear on the invitation as well as the names of his host and hostess,

and that if his host and hostess accord themselves the dignity of the third person, they should likewise give it to him. If the form does not lack respect I think it at least lacks consistency, and I believe that in England it is never used. There the guest's name is always written even though the rest of the invitation is printed.

In notes of invitation to dinner the guest's name of course always appears. This rule is invariable. Engraved notes or cards for dinner invitations have a blank line to be filled in with the pen.

INVITATIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS.

NOTES of invitation are either formal or informal, and may be either engraved or written on note-paper of the proper size. For many invitations cards are more convenient than note-paper and are perfectly good form. Formal invitations to dinners are issued by both the host and the hostess; to weddings by the father and mother of the bride elect. Informal invitations to dinner are issued by the hostess alone, and the same is true of weddings, when the bride's mother gives the invitation. An informal note of invitation to dinner might be as follows :

My dear Dr. Coan,

We are to have a small dinner party on Saturday, May 3rd; will you give us the pleasure of your company? We dine at seven.

Very sincerely yours,

ROSALIE TOWS.

Informal notes of invitation, however, follow the rules for all friendly correspondence, except that they

must always be brief, and for them no special directions are possible.

Invitations to balls, receptions, and garden parties, are issued by the hostess alone.

The arrangement of the lines of an engraved invitation of course requires great care. In the little book on cards in this series, forms, capable however of more or less variation, will be found for invitations to dinners, luncheons, weddings, balls, receptions and golden weddings. It should be borne in mind among other things that the word "evening" must never appear in a formal invitation to dinner or in the reply thereto.

English custom does not sanction coupling the names of the husband and the wife in the address on an envelope. Invitations to dinners and weddings in the best English society, if sent to a man and his wife are always addressed to the wife alone, she being regarded as the head of the domestic and social affairs of the family. Replies to these invitations are addressed in the same way, even though the husband have joined, as he always does join, in giving the invitation. This custom is to my mind, clearly, in much better taste than that of coupling the husband's name with the wife's, and should be strictly followed.

R. S. V. P., *Repondez s'il vous plaît*, is much used on notes of invitation but it can never be the best form. All invitations should be answered except those to receptions, and to put R. S. V. P. in your note

seems like asking the person whom you have invited to do something he would be inexcusable for not doing. R. S. V. P. and P. P. C. should when used strictly be written R. s. v. p., and P. p. c.

Replies to formal invitations of all kinds will have much the same form. In all cases this form will be somewhat as follows :

Mr. and Mrs. Brown have (not will have), much pleasure in accepting Mr. and Mrs. Jones' kind invitation to dinner on Friday, January 8th,

or

Mr. and Mrs. Brown accept with pleasure Mr. and Mrs. Jones' kind invitation, etc.

"Mr. Brown presents his compliments" is good form but old fashioned.

In accepting or refusing invitations all curt phrases written on visiting cards, such as "Accepts with pleasure," or "Regrets," are very bad form. A graceful form of refusal of an invitation which with slight changes will be correct in all cases is the following :

Mr. Brown regrets that a previous engagement prevents his accepting Mr. and Mrs. Jones' kind invitation to dinner on Thursday, January 8th,

or

Mr. Brown regrets that owing to a previous engagement he is unable to accept, etc.,

or

Mr. Brown regrets that absence from town prevents his accepting, etc.

In refusing an invitation some polite excuse must always be given. In refusing an invitation do not use the word *decline*.

All replies to invitations should have at the bottom the address of the writer, and the date, without the year. The date should if possible be limited to the day of the week; the year must never be written. Note-paper stamped with the writer's address needs of course only the date at the bottom.

In addressing a gentleman's note, although you have properly written *Mr.* before his name in the invitation be careful to address his envelope "John Brown, *Esquire.*"

Never answer an invitation on a post card or on business paper.

POSTSCRIPTS.

SAY what you have to say in the body of your letter and use postscripts as little as possible. If you are obliged to add a postscript, put before it the letters P. S., make it as brief as possible, and sign your initials.

Never cross your letters, in these days both paper and postage are cheap.

LETTERS OF CONGRATULATION, CONDOLENCE, ETC.

To write a graceful letter of congratulation, or of sympathy, requires both kindly instinct and practice. One of our most important social duties is the prompt recognition by a graceful, feeling note of any unusual event, any good or ill luck in the lives of our friends. We shall not often make a mistake in extending even to those who are not our most intimate friends our congratulations when they are in joy, our sympathy when they are in sorrow. Indeed the failure to receive the congratulation or sympathy of their friends often lessens people's pleasure or aggravates their pain. Among our most sacred treasures we keep the letters of sympathy we have received when we were in trouble, and we always feel more kindly towards the people who were thoughtful enough to write them.

If we are really kind and sympathetic there is little danger that our letters will ever be considered intrusive. The spirit of the Saviour's injunction, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that

weep," will sometimes impel us, when we know that they are in peculiar trouble, to write to persons with whom we have little or no acquaintance ; and if they are at all well bred, they will only feel grateful for such letters, and be drawn by them more closely to their kind. Such letters, among people who visit, or who have long been acquainted, should never be omitted. Engagements, marriages, births, and deaths, are always events of importance in the families of our friends, and it is very remiss in us not to show our interest in these events. As with all friendly letters, the letters in question should be unstudied, free from affectation, and as nearly as possible like good conversation. "The supreme excellence of a familiar letter is naturalness," some one says. In writing to our friends we should always try to write in the most natural and graceful way the things we should want to say were we conversing with them. Through fear of saying too much people sometimes make their letters barren and colorless ; through fear of seeming discourteous, they often make them stilted and stiff.

After a visit at any one's house always write a letter expressing the pleasure you have had, and acknowledging the kindness you have received as his guest. Never by any chance omit this.

ILL-TEMPERED LETTERS.

NEVER write a grumbling or an ill-tempered letter, *Litera scripta manet*. An ill-tempered utterance always seems worse on paper than when it is spoken. If in a moment of bitterness you should write an offensive letter, one calculated to widen rather than heal the breach between yourself and another person, tear it up and put it in the fire. Many people have an impulse when they have any grievance to pour it out on paper to the offender, or to some other person, but it is an impulse to be severely checked. Bitter words should never be spoken, but much less should they be written. The wounds made by ill natured remarks in letters heal more slowly perhaps than any others. Never send to the post at once a letter written in a sour or angry mood ; if it is a relief to you to write it do so, but let no eyes but your own see it. Never send such a letter merely because you have not time to write another. No letter is infinitely better than a disagreeable one. If you should ever receive an ill-tempered letter, whether you

are in the habit of keeping the letters you receive or not, destroy it at once. The sting it makes is more likely to disappear if the letter is known to be no longer in existence.

or
ore
no

ANONYMOUS LETTERS.

NEVER for any reason write an anonymous letter. Anonymous letters are an abomination. In times of great public disturbance they have sometimes perhaps been necessary, but in social life there is no excuse for them, and no respectable man or woman will ever write one. If at any time you should be unlucky enough to receive such a letter, tear it up if possible without reading it and forget it as soon as you can, for it has been sent by some misguided, or some low, cowardly person. If you have anything to say to a person, say it over your own name or else leave it unsaid. Information or advice given anonymously is likely to do more harm than good.

LETTERS TO ABSENT FRIENDS.

WRITE often to absent friends, particularly the absent members of your own family, your brothers and sisters. A little care in this direction will often bring comfort to a desolate heart, and perhaps act as a restraint on one who is tempted to go wrong. When families scatter there should be some one among them to write weekly letters to the others, or to write a circular letter to be sent from one to the other of the scattered group. There are few ways in which one can be so useful to those nearest him as by patient care year after year in writing to them of the people that interest and the things that concern him and them alike.

ENTHUSIASM ; KIND WORDS IN LETTERS.

Do not be afraid to express yourself sometimes with enthusiasm. Frigid, unemotional letters, like frigid words, chill the person who receives them. If it is not good form to be over demonstrative, it is certainly a great mistake never to express and express heartily one's likes and dislikes. We like much better those whom we have treated with cordiality and to whom we have said kind, appreciative things. Make it a rule of your life to praise people; men and women of common sense are never unduly elated by a little praise. It is an excusable fault to express yourself sometimes more strongly than the virtue you are praising may seem to warrant. Do not be untruthful in your relations with others, but in so far as you reasonably can, try to make them feel happy.

BUSINESS LETTERS.

WHEN we know the general rules for letter-writing we need few rules for any particular form of letter. A business letter like any other may be written gracefully or ungracefully. It may be grammatical or ungrammatical, properly spelled or mispelled, clear in its statements, or ambiguous and hard to understand, concise or wordy. Perhaps the worst fault of many business letters is the bungling or stilted way in which they begin. For example : "I have your letter of the 25th, and in reply I would say, etc." How much more direct and graceful to write : "In reply to your letter of the 25th let me say, etc."

Business letters, and as a rule business letters alone, should bear the name of the person written to at the bottom of the last page, below the writer's signature, in the left hand corner. It is common in America, but it is a disagreeable custom, to put the name and address of the person written to at the beginning of the letter.

In business letters be civil, straightforward, concise as possible, and above all, clear and unambiguous in

your statements. Use good grammar, write legibly on white paper with black ink, and do not cross your letters. In business letters to which you desire an answer, always enclose a stamp.

In general it may be said that business letters should not be written when one can transact his business by word of mouth. Some man has said that he would rather go ten miles out of his way to see a man than write him a letter.

POST CARDS.

FOR business purposes postal (the English say *post*) cards are very convenient, but nothing private should ever be written on them—nothing which your correspondent would not wish known.

ANSWERING LETTERS.

IN answering letters try to satisfy the person to whom you are writing on every point on which he has asked information. Much trouble and annoyance may be saved your correspondent if you will keep his letters on file until you are ready to answer them, and then read them carefully over. If you neglect this, you will be sure to omit in your answer some things of importance to yourself or to him. Correspondence of all kinds should be conducted in a prompt, business-like, thorough way.

5

JOKES ; EGOTISM ; HASTE, ETC.

IN your letters as a rule avoid jokes and personal allusions. There are things which may be said, but cannot be written. In writing always be courteous and dignified.

Be especially careful not to confound your pronouns. When you have occasion to use the words, *he*, *she*, *it*, *them*, *their*, leave no room for doubt about the nouns for which they stand.

Be careful not to write too little on a line, or to separate words unduly. Write long letters only to intimate friends, but to them write whatever you think they will be interested in knowing, and that will probably be whatever interests yourself.

It is possible that fear of egotism sometimes makes people write barren, unsatisfactory letters. They are afraid of saying much about their personal affairs lest they shall seem too self-engrossed. If you are writing to a friend, particularly an intimate friend, do not be afraid to tell him the little details of your life. If he be your friend these are the things that will surely interest him most. The people you meet, the

things you converse about, your home surroundings, the occupations that fill your time, not one of such details can fail to help make your letter interesting. It is these little things that make up the sum of human life, not the exceptional or great things, and he who would establish or keep alive a true, close friendship must speak or write freely of them to his friend.

In all your correspondence if possible avoid haste. Haste implies lack of formality and therefore lack of respect for your correspondent.

KEEPING LETTERS.

THE keeping of letters is a subject on which opinions greatly differ. Some religiously keep every letter they receive, some keep only family letters, while some as sacredly destroy both, preferring that no one besides themselves should ever read their correspondence. The subject is not an indifferent one. Family letters may in time have great value to the descendants of those who have written them, while letters from distinguished persons will surely be treasured by and by. Some letters should clearly be destroyed at once, but it is certain that the wholesale destruction of the letters one receives is a mistake.

WRITING MATERIALS FOR GUESTS.

If you have guests at your house never leave them to "shift for themselves" in the matter of stationery. There is no more delightful hospitality in the world than that of the best English country houses, none more graceful or delicately thoughtful, and one of the recognized duties of this hospitality is to provide each guest with writing materials and postage stamps. In every guest chamber will be found a supply of good white paper and envelopes, a box of postage stamps, a wax taper, and some red sealing wax, together with a list of the hours at which letters arrive and are taken to the post. This is a provision that no American hostess should ever forget to make for the comfort of her guests.

FORMS OF ADDRESS IN WRITING TO PUBLIC MEN, OFFICERS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY, ETC.

THE President of the United States is addressed "His Excellency, the President of the United States, the Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C." and a letter to him should begin, "Sir." The Cabinet officers, who are the Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of War, Secretary of the Navy, Postmaster General, Secretary of the Interior, Attorney General, and Secretary of Agriculture, are addressed as "The Honorable, The Secretary of State (or other department), Washington, D. C." Letters to them should also begin, "Sir."

The Chief Justice and Judges of the Supreme Court are addressed as "The Honorable the Chief Justice of the United States, Washington, D. C." and "The Honorable Justice (surname), Supreme Court of the United States." They are familiarly spoken of as "Mr. Justice (surname)," and when spoken to are addressed as "Your Honor." Besides the Chief Justice there are seven Justices of the Supreme Court. Judges of the

Circuit Courts are addressed as "The Honorable Justice (surname)." There are nine Judicial Circuits in the United States. All other judges, as of the United States Court of Claims, the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, and the District Courts, are addressed in the same way.

Members of the Foreign Legations in the United States often have some title, as Chevalier, Count, Baron, etc., and are usually styled "His Excellency." In Spofford's American Almanac the titles and rank of these men are fully given. If a member of legation have no other title it is courteous to address him as "The Honorable."

Members of the United States Consular Service are usually styled simply "Esquire." Members of the Diplomatic Service of the United States are addressed as "The Honorable." Officers of the regular army, from General to Second Lieutenant, are addressed by their full names prefixed by their titles. The same rule is followed in the case of officers of the navy.

Governors of States are styled "His Excellency Governor (surname)."

Congressmen are styled "The Honorable (surname), M. C."

Mayors of cities are styled "His Worship Mayor (surname)."

Clergymen are addressed as "The Right Reverend," or "The Reverend (Christian name and surname)." To write to, or speak of a clergyman as "The Rever-

end Smith" would be exceedingly bad form. If by any chance you do not know his first name, in addressing him write, "The Reverend —— Smith." In speaking of him always say simply, "Mr. Smith," or if he be a doctor of divinity "Dr. Smith." In abbreviating the word *Reverend*, it is better form to write *Revd.*, putting the *d* above the other letters as in the case of *Mrs.*

Physicians have the letters *M. D.*, written after their names. In writing to them never address them, "Dear Doctor." This is bad form; the surname should always be written.

It is a growing habit in America to speak or write of men as "Sergeant-at-arms Smith," "Sewer Commissioner Jones," "Newspaper Editor Brown," "Civil Service Commissioner Robinson." The habit is detestable and should always be frowned upon. It is not uncommon to see women styled "Mrs. Dr. A., " "Mrs. General B., " "Mrs. Secretary C., " "Mrs. Bishop X., " or even in some quarters "Mrs. Reverend Z." This is entirely wrong.

In England, when "senior" and "junior" are written after men's names they are contracted into "senr." and "junr." English people rarely use more than two names in signing their letters. A lady signs herself "Catherine Smith," not Catherine E. Smith, and people are spoken of not as Mr. John P. Jones, or Mrs. William R. Lord, but as "Mr. John Jones," or "Mrs. William Lord."

FORMS OF ADDRESS IN WRITING TO DISTINGUISHED ENGLISHMEN OR ENGLISHWOMEN.

| <i>Rank.</i> | <i>Commencement.</i> | <i>Conclusion.</i> | <i>Address on the envelope.</i> |
|---|---|---|--|
| The Queen. | Madam : | I have the honor to be, with pro- found veneration, Madam, your Majesty's most faithful and dutiful servant, | The Queen's most Excellent Majesty, or Her Majesty the Queen. |
| The Prince or Princess of Wales. | Sir : or Madam : | I have the honor to be, Sir, or H. Madam, your Royal Highness's most obedient, humble servant, | H. R. H. the Prince (or Princess) of Wales, K. G., etc. |
| A Prince or Princess of the Royal Blood. | Sir : or Madam : | I have the honor to be, Sir, or H. Madam, your Royal Highness's most obedient, humble servant, | H. R. H. the Prince (or Princess) (Christian name), K. G., etc. |
| A Duke. | My Lord Duke : (To a Dutch- ess, Madam) | I have the honor to be, my Lord Duke, your Grace's most obedient, humble servant, | His Grace the Duke of —. (Her Grace, the Duchess of —.) |
| A Marquis. | My Lord Mar- quis : (To a Mar- chioness, etc., Madam) | I have the honor to be, my Lord Marquis, your Lordship's most obedi- (To a Marchioness, your Ladyship's, etc., | The Most Honorable, the Marquis of —. (The Most Honorable, the Marchioness of —.) |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| An Earl. | My Lord: (To a Countess, Madam, etc.) | I have the honor to be, my Lord, The Right Honorable, the Earl of _____. (The Right Honorable the Countess of _____.) |
| A Viscount. | My Lord: (Madam) | Ditto |
| A Baron. | My Lord: (Madam) | Ditto |
| The Eldest Sons of My Lord: Dukes and Marquises (Madam) | | Ditto |
| The Eldest Sons of My Lord: Earls. | | Ditto |
| The Younger Sons of My Lord: Dukes and Marquises (Madam) | | I have the honor to be, my Lord, The Right Honorable, the Earl of _____. (The Right Honorable the Countess of _____.) |
| The Younger Sons of Sir: Earls. (Madam) | | I have the honor to be, Sir, your The Honorable (Christian name and surname), or The Right Honorable the Lady (husband's Christian name and surname.) |

FORMS OF ADDRESS IN WRITING TO DISTINGUISHED ENGLISHMEN OR ENGLISHWOMEN.

| <i>Rank.</i> | <i>Commencement.</i> | <i>Conclusion.</i> | <i>Address on the envelope.</i> |
|--|----------------------|---|--|
| To all Sons of Viscounts and Barons. | Sir: | I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient, humble servant, | The Honorable ((Christian name and surname) or the Honorable Mrs. (husband's Christian name and surname)). |
| The Daughters of Dukes, Marquises and Earls. | (Madam) | I have the honor to be, Madam, your ladyship's most obedient, humble servant, | The Right Honorable the Lady (Christian name and surname.) |
| Daughters of Dukes, Marquises and Earls married to Commoners or Peers' Sons of rank inferior to their own. | Madam: | Ditto | The Right Honorable the Lady (lady's Christian name, and husband's surname). |
| The Daughters of Viscounts and Barons. The same married to Commoners. | Madam: | I have the honor to be Madam, your obedient, humble servant, | The Honorable (Christian name and surname). |
| A Baronet. | Sir: | Ditto | The Honorable Mrs. (husband's surname). |
| A Knight. | Sir: | I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant, | Sir (Christian name and surname). Bart. |
| | | Ditto | Sir (Christian name and surname). If a member of any order, insert initials of order after name. |

The wife of a Baronet Madam :
or Knight.

I have the honor to be, Madam, Lady (surname).
your obedient servant,

An Archbishop.

My Lord Archbishop: I have the honor to be, with the His Grace the Lord Arch-bishop of — highest respect, your Grace's most obedient, humble servant,

A Bishop.

My Lord Bishop : I have the honor to be, my Lord Bishop, your Lordship's obedient, humble servant,

A Dean.

Reverend Sir: I have the honor to be, Reverend Sir, your obedient servant,

An Archdeacon.

Reverend Sir: Ditto
The Venerable the Arch-deacon.

A Rector, Vicar, Curate. Reverend Sir: I have the honor to be, Reverend (Christian name and surname), with (In America or Reverend and Dear) Sir, your it is more obedient servant, common to say Reverend and Dear Sir : My Lord:

I have the honor to be, my Lord, The Right Honorable Sir (Christian name and surname). In the case of puisne judges, omit "Right."

In informal letters, we should say "My Dear Duke," or "Dear Lord —," etc., and end with "Yours sincerely," or some other simple phrase.

The one remaining point in connection with letters to distinguished persons is, whether in these letters, either at the beginning or the end, we should give the address which, when the letter is sealed, will form the superscription. Whoever will take the trouble to examine the official and diplomatic correspondence of colonial times, of New York or New England, will find that in the letters which passed between distinguished people on both sides of the Atlantic, while there is no invariable rule in this matter, the form most common, so common, indeed, that we must regard it as the established form, is to put the full address of the person written to at the close of the letter in the lower left hand corner. There, too, the writer's address and the date may be written, but they may just as properly be placed at the beginning, in the upper right hand corner. Some of the most courtly letters of this period begin simply "Sir" or "Madam," and end without the name of the person written to appearing at all. In this case the superscription on the envelope alone would contain his name and address.

In writing to distinguished persons at home or abroad the following rule may safely be followed. Put your own address as simply as possible at the beginning of your letter, and the name and titles of the person to whom you are writing at the end. The date

may, without any violation of good form, be written directly under your own address, but it is perhaps a little better, if there is plenty of room without crowding, to put it at the end, below the name of your correspondent.

To the whole subject of letter-writing one must bring a clear head, a quick imagination and refined taste, "which," as Herbert Spencer says, "will go far toward making all precepts needless." There may possibly be a few details which have not been touched upon in this little book, but the principles have here been given, and the letter-writer's own good sense may safely be trusted to supply all that has been left out.

n
a
l-
e-

st
d
go
re
en
es
od
en